



County of Middlesex
Office of Parks & Recreation
2016 Adult Fall Softball Leagues
Rules & Regulations

Rule 1- League Administration, Organization and Structure

Section 1. League Management

A. The Adult Softball League is operated under the direction of the Middlesex County Office of Parks & Recreation.

Section 2. Team Registration

A. Registration for all leagues (Spring/Summer and Fall Leagues) begin on January 4, 2016. League fees: **\$375.00** for Sunday Leagues. **\$425.00** per team for all weekday leagues. **Full** payment and team application are due at the time of registration. **CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY MADE PAYABLE TO: TREASURER MIDDLESEX COUNTY. (UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL CASH BE ACCEPTED).** \$100.00 of your entrance fee is held as a forfeit fee deposit and will be refunded at the end of the season provided that your team does not forfeit any games. There are no refunds of league fees once the season has started.

B. To be eligible to participate in the league, all players must be at least eighteen (18) years of age or older.

C. Teams are accepted on a **first come, first serve basis only** and space is limited. Prior participation does not guarantee your team a place in the league for the following season. Your team must re-apply every season. **The Parks & Recreation Office will not and cannot verbally reserve a place in the league for any team in lieu of payment.**

D. The County of Middlesex reserves the right to reject any team names that we feel may be inappropriate or offensive.

Section 3. Rosters

A. Teams must have payment and the application section completed at the time of registration. All teams will have up until to **April 25, 2016** to submit their final team roster and player information for the Spring/Summer Season and **September 19, 2016** for the Fall Season. Rosters will then be date stamped and no additions can be made after those dates. It is the responsibility of each team manager to make sure that everyone who will be playing on their team is listed on their roster. Any team that does not submit a roster by the deadline will receive a forfeit for each subsequent game until their roster is received. There is a limit of twenty (20) players per team.

Section 3. Scheduling

A. The official schedule for all regular season games will be distributed to all team managers at the pre-season meeting. Schedules will also be posted on the official league web site:

<http://mcpr.sportspilot.com/scheduler>

The site will be updated each week with all information pertaining to your league including current standings, schedules, special announcements, etc. It shall be the managers responsibility to know when, where and whom his/her team is scheduled to play and inform all team members.

B. Games are primarily played at **William Warren Park (Florida Grove Road in Wood bridge)& Thomas Edison Park (Mill Road in Edison)**. There may be occasions that Raritan Bay Park in South Amboy will also be a site for games. **The Parks & Recreation Office cannot and will not consider any requests from any team to play their games at a certain time or field.**

C. The status of all games will be announced on the Game Day Information Hotline (*Weekdays after 3:00PM and Sunday after 9:00AM*). The phone number is **732-745-4222**. Players can also sign up on the league web site to receive text messages on the status of games.

D. As per Middlesex County Rules & Regulations, the Sunday before Thanksgiving Day is the last date that any games can be played.

Rule 2- Playing Rules, Regulations and Points of Emphasis

Section 1. Supplies & Equipment

A. Before the season starts, all team managers or a representative must pickup their team information and supplies at the pre-season meeting.

B. All catchers **must** wear a **catcher's face mask**. Female catchers must also wear a helmet. Metal spikes and bat "doughnuts" are prohibited.

C. **Only ASA Approved Aluminum Bats are permitted. No composite or titanium bats whatsoever may be used in league play even if they are ASA Approved. ASA approved aluminum bats with composite handles are permitted.**

Section 2. The Game

A. The umpire shall conduct a pre-game conference with the team managers to discuss rules.

B. Umpire fees are **\$23.00** per game per team for each game. Each team will pay the umpire **prior** to the start of the game. In event of a forfeit, the umpire will be paid **\$46.00** by Middlesex County from the forfeiting teams account. If after two (2) innings a game is called due to inclement weather or any other circumstances, umpire fees are still paid. When game is re-scheduled, payment is once again due. Teams pay umpire fees for the first round of the playoffs. The county will compensate umpires for all other playoff games.

C. **There is NO grace period (Game time is forfeit time).**

D. Each team must supply one (1) new softball per game from those provided to them at the pre-season meeting.

E. In order to start a game each team must have at least nine (9) players present and ready to play at game time. Less than nine (9) players will result in a team forfeit. Teams may use a maximum of ten (10) fielders and may bat up to twelve (12) players. Teams must continue to maintain at least nine (9) players on the field. If a team has started with nine (9) players, other players may enter the game and be added to the batting order on the condition that his/her team has not batted through the order. Those players **must be added to the bottom of the batting order**. If the team has batted through, **additional players may only be added as substitutes**.

F. The pitcher must deliver the ball at moderate speed, underhand and with an arc of **at least six (6) feet (from ground) and no more than 12 feet** from when it leaves the pitchers hand to when it reaches home plate. The umpire will indicate eligible pitch, but the batter has the option to play pitch. A legal pitch that hits any part of home plate and/or the softball mat will be considered a strike.

G. Females are prohibited from participating in any Men's League games and vise versa.

H. Five (5) warm up pitches are allowed in the first inning. No warm up pitches are permitted after the first inning with the exception of a substitution for a new pitcher. A new pitcher will be permitted five warm up pitches.

I. Only the on deck batter is permitted in front of the dugout area.

J. Runner(s) may not leave the base until after the ball has been hit by the batter. Violation will result in the runner(s) being out. The pitch will count as called by the umpire.

K. All batters will start with a one (1) and one (1) count. A batter is out on the third strike **(including a foul ball)**. However, if the foul ball is caught, the ball remains in play and runners may advance at their own risk.

L. There is a five (5) over the fence home run limit for each team per game. Any subsequent home run ball hit over the fence will be called an "out".

M. Courtesy Runners are permitted. The courtesy runner **must** be the last player to make a **batted** out. The only exception is if the game is in the first inning and there are no outs. In that case the last player in the batting order will become the courtesy runner.

N. All runners will be awarded two bases from the start of play on a ball thrown **"out of play"**. Players positioning when the ball is thrown out of play will govern base advancement.

O. **Hit and Sit Rule:** Batters and runners **DO NOT** run the bases on any home run ball that is hit over the fence.

P. Re-entry rule will be in effect. Substitutions must be reported to the umpire. Re-entry is allowed only one time per player and batting order must remain the same.

Q. **Double First Base.** A double first base will be used. All batters who have committed to overrunning first base must proceed to and touch the orange base. All fielders **MUST** have possession of the ball with their foot on the white base in order for an out to be recorded.

R. There is to be no contact on the basepaths. All runners must either slide or surrender in order to avoid a collision on any play on the basepaths.

S. **Run Ahead (Mercy) Rule.** The following Run Ahead (Mercy) Rule is in affect: Twelve (12) runs after 5 innings of play (*4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead by Twelve (12) runs or more*).

T. Forfeiture of two (2) games by any team will result in removal from the league. Any subsequent games will be recorded as a "7-0" win for the opposing team. Teams will not be charged an official forfeit provided that they notify the Parks & Recreation Department that their team will not be present by **no later than 12:00PM** on the day of the game. For Sunday Leagues you must call by 4:00PM on Friday. **You must speak to a live person (Do not leave a voicemail message).** The game result will still be recorded as a 7-0 loss.

U. All games (including playoffs) are considered regulation after 5 innings (4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead). **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.** If a game is called after five (5) innings but before (7) seven innings, the final score will revert back to the last completed inning.

V. **RAIN OUTS:** We will attempt to re-schedule games that are rained out but all games may not be able to be played if there are a large amount of cancellations during the season.

RULES SPECIFIC TO CO-ED LEAGUES ONLY

A. All teams must have a minimum of four (4) female players to start the game and must continue to play with four (4) female players in the field.

EXCEPTION: If a team has six (6) male players and four (4) female players and a female gets injured and can no longer continue playing in the game and there is no female substitute available, that team can play with 6 males and 3 females in the field. The injured female player's spot in the batting order will become an automatic out.

B. An alternate male-female batting order must be used.

C. All male batters who walk will be awarded 2nd base. Runners who are already on base will advance two (2) bases only if forced.

D. When courtesy runners and substitutes are used a male player can only replace a male player and a female player can only replace a female. Regular re-entry rules apply for substitutes.

Section 3. Post-Season Play

- A.** Post-season (*playoff*) play will start after the conclusion of the regular season.
- B.** The top eight (8) teams in each league will qualify for the playoffs in each league (*unless a league has less than eight (8) total teams*). Please be advised however that the post-season format is subject to change at the discretion of the Office of Parks and Recreation if there are a large amount of game cancellations during the regular season and/or playoffs.
- C.** In the event of a tie for post-season seeding, the final standings and playoff seedings will be determined by the following criteria:

- 1) “Head to Head” Competition
- 2) Least amount of runs given up against only teams that are tied
- 3) Least amount of runs given up against all opponents
- 4) Coin Toss

D. The post season will be as follows:

- 1) All rounds of the playoffs are the best two out of three games with the exception of the first and semifinal round of all Co-Ed leagues which are single elimination. All three (3) games (*if necessary*) will be played on the same day. The Higher Seed will be the Home Team for Game 1 and Game 3 (*if necessary*). In all co-ed and women's leagues, the first round and the semifinal round may be played on the same day.

2) PLAYOFF FORMAT- Wednesday & Thursday Co-Ed Leagues- First Round

- a) Team One (1) will play Team Eight (8)
- b) Team Two (2) will play Team Seven (7)
- c) Team Three (3) will play Team Six (6)
- d) Team Four (4) will play Team Five (5)

3) SEMIFINAL ROUND

- a) Teams are re-seeded
- b) The Highest Remaining Seed will play the Lowest Remaining Seed
- c) Next Highest Seed will play the Next Lowest Seed

4) CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND

- a) The two (2) semifinal winners will play for the league championship

5) PLAYOFF FORMAT- Monday & Tuesday Men's Leagues- First Round

- a) Team One (1) and Team Two (2) receive a first round bye
- b) Team Two (3) will play Team Seven (6)
- c) Team Three (4) will play Team Six (5)

6) SEMIFINAL ROUND

- a) Team One (1) will play the lowest remaining seed.
- b) Team Two (2) will play the highest remaining seed.

7) CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND

- a) The two (2) semifinal winners will play for the league championship

**TEAMS PAY UMPIRE FEES FOR THE
FIRST ROUND OF THE PLAYOFFS.
THE COUNTY WILL COMPENSATE UMPIRES FOR THE
SEMIFINAL AND THE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND**

Section 4. Game Protests

A. After an alleged infraction, notification to protest must be made **immediately** before next pitch. The manager of the protesting team shall be the only person to notify the umpire that the game is being played under protest. The umpire will notify the opposing manager. All protests must then be submitted in writing, within twenty-four (24) hours of the game to the Director of Parks & Recreation, who will review protest(s) within forty-eight (48) hours.

B. To appeal a play to the umpire the ball must be returned to the pitcher and the appeal made by the pitcher. With verbal acknowledgment from the umpire, the ball will be declared a “Dead Ball”, and runners may not advance. There will be only one (1) appeal per play.

Umpire’s decision is final.

C. No protests will be allowed on any decision of any umpire on the grounds that the umpire was incorrect in as to whether a batted ball was fair or foul, a runner safe or out, a pitched ball a ball or strike, or any play involving accuracy of judgment.

PROTEST OF ILLEGAL PLAYERS AND/OR TEAM ROSTERS

Any protest on the grounds that a team is using illegal, non roster players must be done **prior** to the start of the game (unless the player(s) being challenged arrives late and attempts to enter the game). This protest must be done by the opposing team manager to the umpire. In a best two out of three game playoff series, it must be done prior to the start of the first game (unless the player(s) arrived late). The umpire will notify both teams that the game is being played under protest. Any team found using a non-rostered player(s) during a league game will receive a forfeit. Player’s are permitted to play on **only one (1)** team per division.

Section 5 Player and Team Code of Conduct

A. This is a Middlesex County sponsored league **strictly for recreation**, and as such, un-sportsmanlike conduct does not belong. ***Foul and abusive language towards other players, spectators, umpires and county officials will not be tolerated and will result in player and/or team suspension or expulsion from the league. Physical threats and/or actions will result in player and/or team suspension or expulsion from the league, and other possible Recreation Department activities.***

B. Any player ejected from a game will receive a **minimum** one (1) game suspension. A second ejection will result in expulsion from all Middlesex County Parks & Recreation Leagues for the remainder of the season.

C. *Alcoholic beverages are prohibited on the field or surrounding area as per Middlesex County Parks Rules & Regulations.*

Any team found violating this policy will have their game stopped without warning and forfeited to the opposing team. A second offense will result in the team’s removal for the season.

D. Each team is responsible for their players, and spectators, leaving the field and surrounding area clean and free of debris.

E. Smoking is prohibited on the playing field.

F. It is recommended that each team carry insurance to protect players in case of injury. **THE COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX DOES NOT PROVIDE THIS COVERAGE.**

**IT IS THE MANAGERS RESPONSIBILITY
THAT ALL PLAYERS ON HIS/HER TEAM
ARE MADE AWARE OF ALL OF THE
RULES & REGULATIONS OF THIS LEAGUE !!!!**

PHONE NUMBERS & CONTACTS

**PARKS & RECREATION OFFICE
732-745-4222 or 732-745-3900**

**GAME DAY INFORMATION LINE
732-745-4222 AFTER 4:00PM ON WEEKDAYS;
SUNDAYS AFTER 9:00AM**

INTERNET:

<http://mcpr.sportspilot.com/scheduler>

**Information such as league schedules
(including make up games), up to date scores and standings,
bulletins and special announcements will be posted on the site !!!!
All players can also sign up on the league web site to
receive text messages regarding the status of games
and other league information.**

**The Middlesex County Parks & Recreation Office
is located on 1030 River Road in Piscataway**

**Our Mailing Address is:
Middlesex County Office of Parks & Recreation
P.O. Box 661
New Brunswick, NJ 08903**

**Thank you for your participation in the
Middlesex County Parks & Recreation Adult Softball League.
We hope you have a fun season of playing recreational softball.**